



Mount Mitchell State Park



100 YEAR CELEBRATION

In 2016, the North Carolina state parks system celebrates its 100th anniversary. We're commemorating North Carolina plans to celebrate the state parks system's centennial throughout the year with a series of special events, festivals and a myriad of other fun and entertaining activities.

Your state parks connect us all with our rich natural heritage and our history and contribute significantly to the economy of the state. The Centennial Celebration is a premier opportunity to recognize the visionary leaders of our state who set the wheels in motion to create a parks system which has grown to 225,000 acres and delights more than 15.6 million visitors each year.

The General Assembly authorized the purchase of land for a state park at Mount Mitchell on March 3, 1915, and 795 acres on the summit were acquired by the end of 1916, which firmly established the first state park in the southeastern United States. North Carolina set a standard for the nation in protecting its natural resources. The state parks centennial in 2016 is an opportunity for all North Carolinians to renew a shared commitment of stewardship of those resources.

Today, your state parks protect North Carolina's natural heritage, educate citizens about how to be responsible environmental stewards and offer a wealth of recreational opportunities for enjoyment and health benefits. Please visit one or more in 2016. We're sure you will find them to be Naturally Wonderful!



Natural and Cultural Resources

Roy Cooper
Governor
Susi H. Hamilton
Secretary

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Crowders Mountain State Park

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

Naturally Wonderful

OUR MISSION

The North Carolina State Parks System exists for the enjoyment, education, health and inspiration of all our citizens and visitors.

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation is:

- to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;
- to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina; and,
- to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources for all citizens and visitors in North Carolina.

The North Carolina parks system's Website gives complete information on each of our parks as well as programs of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. You'll find maps that can be downloaded plus details on park facilities, fees, reservations and special outdoor activities such as cycling, kayaking and rock climbing. Contact information for each park is provided as well as an up-to-date calendar of educational programs and special events. Check it out before your visit at www.ncparks.gov.

We also offer specialized brochures for many of our parks. These brochures include park maps and describe facilities in detail as well as the unique natural and historic aspects of the park. Just contact the park office or our Raleigh office at 919-707-9300, or email us at parkinfo@ncmail.net.



Lake Waccamaw State Park



Pilot Mountain State Park



Carvers Creek State Park



Merchants Millpond State Park



Carolina Beach State Park



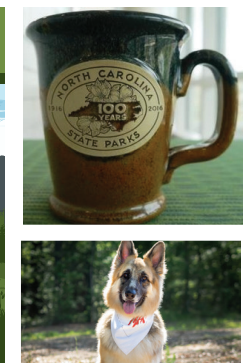
Jordan Lake State Recreation Area



Lumber River State Park



Fort Fisher State Recreation Area



ABOUT OUR PARKS...

In North Carolina, we like to call our state parks “Naturally Wonderful.” For us, this is more than a catch phrase. It indicates how we develop and manage our state parks and recreation areas.

It has to do with our mission statement on the facing page, which, in turn, evolved from our state’s Constitution. Our principal mission is to preserve and protect the stunning natural resources in North Carolina. The Division strives to balance the protection of the more than 225,000 acres of parkland in our system while providing high quality outdoor recreation. We have developed these parks cautiously with this idea in mind. While there are myriad recreational opportunities, our mission demands relatively low-impact activities. We have been careful to arrange campgrounds and park amenities to complement, rather than compete with the natural features that attract so many visitors.

While visiting our state parks, you’ll find that fees for camping, swimming and other park activities are very reasonable. Early on, the people of North Carolina decided that the state’s array of natural treasures should be enjoyed by as many as possible. Enjoy your exploration of North Carolina’s state parks.

Please visit our Website for a complete list of new parks under development and other types of units, including our 20 state natural areas.



SUPPORT STATE PARKS

There are so many ways you can support our state parks:

- Do you have some extra time to help us with a project? Visit our website for information about volunteering at a park.
- Visit our web store to see our full line of merchandise—we have everything from Christmas ornaments to coffee mugs. Celebrate our 2016 Centennial by purchasing commemorative NC State Parks 100th Anniversary merchandise. These items are great gifts for that special state parks fan, including yourself. www.ncparkstore.com
- Join the Friends of State Parks to help support, promote, and advocate for the parks system as a whole, or join the friends group of your favorite park. www.fsp.org
- Keep the parks around for the next generation. Make a donation at www.fsp.org/Donate
- Show your support for North Carolina State Parks all year around by buying a State Parks License Plate. Contact the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles to purchase a plate. www.ncdot.org/dmv/ Additional fees support the Friends of State Parks.



RESERVATIONS

A full-service, online- and call center-based reservations system can be used to reserve campsites, cabins, picnic shelters, auditoriums, classrooms, conference rooms and community buildings. Where reservations are offered, there are requirements for advance notice and minimum and maximum stays.



NCPARKS.GOV
1-877-7-CAMP-NC
(1-877-722-6762)

Park gates may be locked each night when the park closes. So, make sure you understand the gate policies at the park and plan accordingly when arranging your arrival time and when making daytime excursions outside the park.



PARKS & RECREATION TRUST FUND

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) helps enhance the quality of life for North Carolinians by preserving the state’s natural resources, buying parkland and building public recreation facilities. PARTF has conserved more than 40,000 acres of state parkland and developed new visitor centers, campgrounds, improved trails, swim areas and educational exhibits for our citizens. The trust fund is the primary funding source for adding to and improving state parks.

PARTF also provides matching grants for local governments to improve close-to-home recreation opportunities. Visit the trust fund’s Website at www.ncparks.gov/partf

EDUCATION & KIDS

Did you know that many plants atop Mount Mitchell are rare in North Carolina, but common in Quebec? Did you know that the giant sand dunes at Jockey’s Ridge are constantly moving? Do you know how to safely hold a crayfish? Interpretation & Education programs help reveal what makes North Carolina state parks *Naturally Wonderful*.

Discover More with a Ranger

From fishing lessons to astronomy programs, from tree identification hikes to guided canoe paddles—parks offer programs for all ages. Visit our website for a list of upcoming programs.

Junior Rangers

Junior Ranger guides are geared for ages 6-12. Kids do fun activities and attend ranger programs to earn a special patch. Ask about the program at a park office or download the guide at www.ncparks.gov.

Environmental Education Learning Experiences

Parks have their own curriculum guides that tie science and social studies into hands-on field trips for schools. Many parks have exciting exhibit halls for self-guided discovery.



TRAILS PROGRAM

The North Carolina Trails Program helps volunteers, nonprofit groups and government agencies plan, develop and manage greenways, routes for hiking, biking and horseback riding, as well as water trails and off-road vehicle trails. The program administers the federal Recreational Trails Program, which provides grants to non-profit organizations and governmental agencies for a variety of trail projects. www.ncparks.gov/trails

The trails program is also planning, promoting and developing a system of trails across North Carolina and the flagship trail for this statewide effort is North Carolina’s Mountains-to-Sea State Trail. The trail will connect Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Jockey’s Ridge State Park when complete, a distance of some 1,000 miles.



RULES & SAFETY

We’re serious about safety. Follow these tips and rules to make your visit to North Carolina’s state parks a safe and rewarding experience. Check with the park office for other rules pertaining to specific parks. A complete set of regulations is posted at the park office.

- Park speed limits are 25 mph unless otherwise posted. Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists and wildlife.
- Don’t swim alone or exceed your swimming abilities.
- Supervise children at all times and equip them with personal flotation devices when playing around water.
- Dress properly. Check with park staff regarding weather and terrain.
- Make your plans known to park staff and family members should you plan a long hike.
- Allow plenty of time for hikes as daylight hours shorten so you won’t be caught by darkness.
- Stay on designated trails and away from streams, waterfalls and cliff faces.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited. Animals can be dangerous and carry disease. Report unusual behavior to park staff.
- The removal of any plant, animal, rock or artifact is prohibited.
- Areas managed by North Carolina State Parks are wildlife preserves. Hunting or trapping is prohibited.
- Pets must be on an attended leash six feet or less. Pets aren’t allowed in public buildings, bathhouses or swimming areas.
- Boating and fishing regulations of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission are enforced. Appropriate licenses for freshwater, saltwater and trout fishing are required.
- Firearms and other weapons are prohibited except that those with a proper permit may possess a concealed handgun in permitted areas & under the requirements of North Carolina G.S. 14-415.11. All firearms and weapons are prohibited in state park visitor centers and offices. Persons acting under this exception should take notice that certain Division managed properties are owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and subject to separate regulations governing firearms. Accordingly, concealed handguns are prohibited at Falls, Jordan and Kerr Lake State Recreation Areas.
- Fires are permitted in designated areas only.
- Camping is permitted in designated areas, by permit only.
- The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Swimming is permitted in designated areas only.



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